



**HAMILTON COUNTY**  
**LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEE**

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## **MINUTES**

### **LEPC Meeting, March 12, 2003**

A meeting of the Hamilton County Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) was held March 12, 2003 at the Chattanooga Fire & Police Services Center, 3200 Amnicola Highway, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

**Those in attendance were:**

Jamie Farrow, Chairperson, Barge, Waggoner, Sumner and Cannon (BWSC)  
Bruce Garner, First Vice Chair, Chattanooga Fire Department  
Dane Creel, Vice Chairman, Nabisco, Inc.  
Wayne Stuntz, Secretary, Hamilton County Emergency Services  
David Darnell, Vice Chairman, BASF  
Richard Twitchell, Vice Chairman, Self  
Jim Coppinger, Chattanooga Fire Dept.  
Tony Quarles, Chattanooga Fire Dept.  
Lamar Flint, Chattanooga Fire Dept.  
Jim Appleberry, Chattanooga Fire Dept.  
Larry Reich, Tri-State Security Agency  
Robert Dozier, Chattanooga Fire Dept.  
John Gus Vlasik, Chattanooga Fire Dept.  
Chuck Nichols, Chattanooga Fire Dept.  
Don Hood, First Response, Inc.  
Michael Wester, Norfolk Southern  
Joe Oliver, Norfolk Southern  
Charise Lammar, Brenntag Mid-South  
Chris Young, Atlanta Gas Light Company  
Mark Starrett, Atlanta Gas Light Company  
Jim Parks, Chattanooga Health Dept.  
Michael Poe, SOFIX Corp.  
Denise Thacker, Velsicol Chemical  
Caroline Williams, League of Women Voters

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**Those in Attendance (Cont):**

Amy Maxwell, Hamilton County Emergency Services  
Ben Kirby, ConAgra Foods  
Tim Nance, DPC Enterprises  
Michael Campbell, DPC Enterprises  
Bill Tittle, Hamilton County Emergency Services  
Girsih Patel, ALCO Chemical  
Robin Taylor, Plantation Pike Line Company  
Paul Patty, Sonitrol  
Gerald Ellis, Sonitrol  
Mike Edwards, McKee Foods  
Tony Reavley, Hamilton County Emergency Services  
Buddy Kamin, Hamilton County Emergency Services  
Denny Day, Associated Emergency Service  
Brian-Lopez Cepero, Self

Chairman Jamie Farrow called the meeting to order at 10:38 a.m. and welcomed all in attendance. Recognizing new faces, Ms Farrow asked for introductions.

**Old Business**

The Chairman asked if everyone had received the minutes from the January 8, 2003 meeting. All in attendance indicated that they had and Chairman Farrow asked for a motion to approve minutes as written. There being no request for correction or discussion, Tony Reavley made the motion to adopt minutes as written, motion was seconded by Dick Twitchell and unanimously approved by the committee at large.

The Secretary-Treasurer gave the financial report previously handed out to those in attendance. Mr. Stuntz said the LEPC's current AmSouth Bank account balance is \$21,924.38. A copy of the financial report is a matter of record. Mr. Stuntz added that all LEPC financial documents had been turned over to the County Auditor for audit. This action is a customary request of a new LEPC Chairpersons.

Ms Farrow added that she had received e-mails from concerned members regarding the substantial balance of the LEPC financial account. Ms. Farrow reminded the committee that the Plans subcommittee is still searching for a computer software program to benefit first responders as well as the LEPC. Ms Farrow reminded members that at the last meeting she said that "if anyone was aware of a particular need to utilize these funds—to let the Executive committee know about it." Ms Farrow then thanked Atlanta Gas Light Company for their donation of \$500.00.

Mr. Bruce Garner offered further discussion on the LEPCs financial status. Bruce said that one of the things the LEPC had as its goal (while he was Chairperson) was to build a bank account and get the maximum use of its dollars—in terms of spending the money. He said that it is one thing to spend the money on things that are expendable, i.e. for city/county Hazmat teams to use during certain hazmat incidents—then they are gone without having anything to show for it. Bruce said that his thinking was to apply the money to something that would fulfill the mission of the

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LEPC—which is involved in planning for emergencies involving hazardous materials, and to identify a need that will fulfill the LEPCs obligation in terms of developing a response plan and having workable, useable, and up-to-date information for the Hazmat teams.

Mr. Garner went on to say that in the past, the LEPC has been trying to identify and purchase, a useful software program that would contain a data base of all of the chemical companies with up-to-date and accurate information. Bruce said that this has been the goal of the LEPC in terms of how to spend the money.

The Chairman then asked if there was any other Old Business to discuss—there being none moved on to new business.

### **New Business**

Chairman Farrow told the committee that TEMA has offered to the Hamilton County LEPC grant money in the amount of \$3,000.00 to be utilized for training. Ms. Farrow asked Chief Tittle if he would bring the committee up-to-date on the decision to offer this grant to the Hamilton County LEPC.

Chief Tittle told the committee that TEMA East's decision to give the conference grant to Knoxville, TN was in no way a reflection on this LEPC to put on a conference. On the contrary, he said that this LEPC has put on excellent conferences and that TEMA's decision was simply a geographical one. Chief Tittle said that the Director of TEMA East told him that if there was any money left over from the two grant options, it would be offered to Hamilton County's LEPC for training purposes.

The Chairperson then asked for subcommittee updates. Ms. Farrow first called upon Mr. Martin, Chair of the Plans subcommittee—noting his absence, called on Mr. Bruce Garner, Chairperson of the Exercise subcommittee. Bruce said it was still early in the process, but he had talked with a few members who have agreed to serve on the committee. He said he also intends to focus on involving member agencies who have yet to be involved in exercises.

Mr. Twitchell, Chair of the Membership subcommittee said that in attendance were two companies that wished to become members of the LEPC. Mr. Twitchell then recognized Mr. Don Hood of First Response, Inc., and noted that First Response their role is to provide environmental and emergency services and were new comers to the Chattanooga area.

The Chairman asked for a motion to accept Mr. Hood and his company as a member of the LEPC. Mr. Stuntz made the motion, seconded by Mr. Brian-Lopez Cepero and unanimously approved by the committee at large.

Ms. Farrow then called on Mr. Dane Creel, Chairperson of the Programs subcommittee. Mr. Creel said that the next meeting scheduled for May 14<sup>th</sup> and would be at Wally's in East Ridge. Dane said that Mr. Thom Benson, Channel 3 Meteorologist, will be the guest speaker for the meeting.

Ms. Farrow then spoke of a newly conceived subcommittee called “public outreach” for which a Chairperson has yet to be named. Ms Farrow reminded the committee that the LEPC has done

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public outreach at the Discovery Museum over the years—handing out LEPC brochures, showing the Shelter-In-Place video, but, due to staff cuts, the Museum has cut this program out.

Ms Farrow said that the museum would be willing to continue the program if the LEPC and other groups would participate. Ms. Farrow said that she will be calling on members to serve on a Public Outreach subcommittee. Jamie also reminded members that the LEPC will be involved in a similar outreach program at the Chattanooga Made in May, and that someone will be contacting members to participate in that program.

Mr. Darnell brought to the attention of the committee that Chattanooga Made is an ideal outlet for industry in Chattanooga and provides them an opportunity to display information about things that are produced in Hamilton County. David said that although the LEPC does not produce a tangible product—we do provide a service that people need to be aware of. Mr. Darnell said that one of the differences however is that a large percentage of vendors/manufacturers have what he termed as a “grabber”—something that people want to have, a token to take home. He said that the LEPC does not have any of these things—just a video and a brochure about the LEPC—nothing that people see of value.

Mr. Darnell asked if the Executive Board and general membership would be agreeable to set aside a small amount of money to come up with something that would be alluring and draw people to the LEPC booth? Following a brief discussion, a motion was made, seconded, and unanimously approved by the committee at large to set aside \$500.00 to produce such a free gift.

Ms. Farrow reminded members of another outreach effort—that of contacting companies, such as RMP companies, and asking them to join the LEPC. Jamie said she made contact with Ixion Ceramics and Synair about becoming members of the LEPC. Ms. Farrow made a plea again for member agencies to take a look in their area and perhaps find a neighbor company that is currently not a member and ask them to join.

Along the lines of “outreach”, Ms. Farrow said that she had sent letters to Dr. David Ciraulo of the Erlanger Medical Center and Deputy Chief Lamar Flint of the Chattanooga Fire Department offering LEPC’s assistance, if needed, in relation to Dr. Ciraulo’s involvement with the Disaster Medical Assistance Team (DMAT) and Chief Flint’s association with the Metropolitan Medical Response Systems (MMRS).

The Chairman reminded the committee that Tier II forms were due March 1<sup>st</sup> and if they have not been submitted yet—to do so soon. Ms. Farrow said that although the annual donations letter had not been sent out yet—she reminded the membership that donations were strictly a voluntary issue based on the number of chemicals a company has, and that a donation solicitation letter would be forthcoming.

Ms. Farrow brought up an issue regarding Emergency Response Plans that are submitted to the LEPC by industry—that one company is tasked the LEPC with the responsibility of forwarding copies of their plan to concerned citizens and members of the community.

Following a brief discussion on this issue, Mr. Darnell reminded the committee that while the LEPC is a repository for certain information—that requests for copies of such information, (i.e. Tier II’s, and company contingency plans), must be submitted in writing to the LEPC

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and that a small copying fee would be assessed for the number of pages requested.

Mr. Garner suggested that a temporary Information Security subcommittee be formed to address concerns regarding current procedures for disclosing information to the public and what changes need to be implemented to address those concerns. Mr. Charlie Lamar of Brenntag, Mr. Mike Poe of Sofix, Bill Tittle of Hamilton County Emergency Services, and Bruce Garner of the Chattanooga Fire Department offered to serve on this newly formed, temporary subcommittee.

Mr. Darnell said that CSX Transportation has presented the LEPC with an opportunity to conduct a Crisis Management exercise in Hamilton County, at no expense to the LEPC. Mr. Darnell has been working with a consulting group out of Baltimore, MD provided by CSX Transportation, to conduct this half-day exercise. David also said that Chris Adams of the Chattanooga Fire Department had also been contacted by this group and is involved in the planning of this event—to be held at the Chattanooga Fire Department Fire & police Training Center on June 27, 2003.

Mr. Darnell also said that exercise participants would be limited to those who would normally respond to such an event. David said that the exercise scenario will be consistent with normal rail circumstances here in Hamilton County and that the location for the exercise is yet to be determined. David said that an update to this will be offered at our meeting in May.

Ms Farrow asked Mr. Bruce Garner to introduced Chattanooga Fire Chief, Jim Coppinger as our guest speaker. Following the introduction, Chief Coppinger said he wished to thank the LEPC for the opportunity to host the meeting and talk about what the Fire Department is doing. But first, Chief Coppinger graciously recognized Hamilton County Emergency Management members present for their support and said that it is because of Emergency Management that the LEPC exists and that has allowed the Fire Department the opportunity to network and partner with industry on things the Fire Department is involved with.

The Chief said that a lot of things have transformed in his department as a result of 9/11 and recognized members of his staff for their contribution to a successful organization. Chief Coppinger said that his department has been awarded a Department of Justice WMD grant that has afforded the department an opportunity to send over a one hundred people to the New Mexico WMD and terrorism training; approximately 70 personnel to Alabama for extensive training dealing with live nerve agents and incident command; and for sending personnel to Reno, Nevada for radiological training—and added, at no expense to the taxpayer.

Chief Coppinger thanked Chris Young with Atlanta Gas for the opportunity, through in-house training, to allow every fire fighter in the department to be involved with live natural gas fires.

The Fire Chief told the committee about a May 2, 2003 full scale WMD exercise involving local, state and federal agencies. He said this would be the largest exercise the city of Chattanooga has ever experienced and it will provide his department an opportunity to test its resources, and to understand its capabilities and limitations.

The Chief reminded those not involved in emergency response to take comfort in knowing that the Chattanooga Fire Department and surrounding fire departments train daily to prepare for

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emergency responses. He also said that when the Home Land Security condition changes to condition Orange, a heightened alert status—that really doesn't mean anything to a fire fighter because they are constantly in ready status and that the fire department cannot afford to let their guard down. He said that as a first response agency, the fire department must be vigilant and perfect their skills to provide service to the community when needed.

Mr. Brian Cepero commented that the state of Tennessee was awarded a 10.9 million dollar federal grant by the Department of Homeland Security for first responders and that applications had to be in by April 22, 2003. He said that Chief Tittle was the contact for Hamilton County.

The Chief said that General Hummel, head of Tennessee Homeland Security, in a meeting with the Major and Police Chief, Jimmie Dotson said that Homeland Security will start at the local level and with the local fire departments that will be the first agencies to respond to the scene that does have enough resources to contain or resolve the issue.

Chief Coppinger said that in fire services there are a lot of unfounded mandates from the federal government—which ultimately falls on the local government to fund. He urged members to talk with elected officials and ask them about funding for response agencies under homeland security—how will this affect local governments equip and train their departments?

Mr. Darnell took this opportunity to ask Chief Coppinger of the Chattanooga Fire Department and Chief Tittle of Emergency Services—how can the LEPC help their respective agencies? Chief Coppinger said that mainly it is in the support the LEPC member agencies provide on a daily basis to keep the community safe from chemical hazards and the partnerships that develop from interaction. Chief Tittle said that he was worried about the surge capacity in the event of a mass casualty event as Hamilton County is a target rich community—adding Chattanooga is the most target rich city in the state of TN.

Ms Farrow thanked Chief Coppinger for his excellent presentation, for hosting the meeting and for the great lunch that was provided courtesy of the Chattanooga Fire Department. She also reminded everyone that the next meet is set for May 14, 2003. The Chairman then declared the meeting adjourned.